Brussels brothers on security duty

They're Secret Service agents

By Sean Schultz
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DE PERE — When the Secret Service came to town, it brought along two locals.

Agents Tim and Joe Alexander, both now living near Washington, D.C., but natives of Brussels in southern Door County, were assigned to cover the presidential visit to De Pere. Their brother, Sam, is also an agent, but he didn't make this trip.

Tim, 35, was at the airport before Clinton's arrival, while Joe was assigned to Voyageur Park.

"He's making sure Mom and Dad get a good seat," Tim said. The trio's parents are Allen and Theresa Alexander of Brussels.

Tim, a 15-year Secret Service employee, is a security specialist.

"I'm the guy who does the environmental safety, including explosive sweeps," he said.

The 1978 Southern Door graduate said he's been in the field on a campaign assignment since Aug. 2.

Sam, 38, led him into the service while Sam was a Marine stationed at Camp David. Sam's title is agent, while Joe, 31, is an officer with the uniform division of the Secret Service.

"I don't think you'll find anyone else with three brothers in there," Tim said.

Preparing for the president's visit to De Pere was "a lot easier" than some other locales, Tim noted.

"People are still willing to work with you," he said. "They'll do anything they can to make sure we have a safe environment."

Tim's aunt and uncle, Jack and Yvonne Alexander of West De Pere, took their two children to the airport to get a closeup view of Clinton when he arrived.

"We especially wanted our children to see this," Jack said.

He suggested that the Alexander family's three agents were inspired in their work after growing up in southern Door County.

"Brussels is small and everybody takes care of everybody else," Jack said. "We just grew up with those values — you watch out for each other."

Joe's wife, Dionne, took advantage of her husband's assignment to De Pere to make a trip home to see family in Door County. She brought along baby Erin, 7 months, whose godfather is her Uncle Tim.

"There is no Southern Door High School around (the Washington, D.C., area). The kids walk through metal detectors to get into school."

—Dionne Alexander, wife of agent and Brussels native Joe Alexander

Being the spouse of a Secret Service agent is "real good while you're young, newly married," Dionne said. "It's tougher once you have kids."

Raising a family in the Washington area will be vastly different than living in Door County, she said.

"There is no Southern Door High School around there," she said. "The kids walk through metal detectors to get into school."

She said Joe has been a guest at his old alma mater, speaking to kids about his job. His mother teaches in the grade school at Southern Door.

In the end, Tim's family members at the airport were foiled in their efforts to get a front-row view of Clinton. Moments before his arrival, they were herded with others into the Safety Building by another Secret Service agent, despite their protests.

"They wanted us to be in a room with no windows at first," Yvonne said.

Finally, they were allowed to view the arrival through a window in the building, dozens of yards from their original placement.

"It was disappointing that we would be pushed off," said Yvonne's cousin, Lori Chaudoir-Nye of Green Bay. "We had the kids here, and it was a once-in-a lifetime thing for them."